

LISTING OF PENDING CLAIMS

1. (Withdrawn) An exercise apparatus comprising:
a base having a plurality of projections extending upward from the base; and
at least one removable overlay having a thickness and apertures corresponding to the plurality of projections.
2. (Withdrawn) The exercise apparatus according to claim 1, wherein at least two of the plurality of projections have different heights.
3. (Withdrawn) The exercise apparatus according to claim 1, wherein at least two of the plurality of projections have a different modulus of elasticity.
4. (Withdrawn) The exercise apparatus according to claim 1, wherein there are at least two removable overlays having different respective thicknesses.
5. (Withdrawn) The exercise apparatus according to claim 4, wherein there are three removable overlays having different respective thicknesses.
6. (Withdrawn) The exercise apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the respective thicknesses of the three removable overlays are 1/4 inch, 1/2 inch and 1 inch.
7. (Withdrawn) The exercise apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of projections are randomly spaced.
8. (Withdrawn) The exercise apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a surface treatment covering at least one of the base and the plurality of projections.

9. (Previously presented) A belt kit for a treadmill, the belt kit comprising:
at least two separate belts dimensioned for use on the treadmill, the at least two separate belts each comprising a base having a plurality of projections extending upward from the base;
a first belt of the at least two separate belts having a first continuous, consistent surface;
a second belt of the at least two separate belts having a second continuous, consistent surface,
wherein the first and the second surfaces are different from each other in at least one of a size of the plurality of projections and a surface treatment,
the first belt and the second belt are dimensioned for direct foot contact, and
the first belt is dimensioned to impart proprioceptive demands on the foot, ankle and lower leg different from those of the second belt.

10. (Previously presented) The belt kit according to claim 9, wherein at least two of the plurality of projections on one of the at least two separate belts have different heights.

11. (Previously presented) The belt kit according to claim 9, wherein at least two of the plurality of projections on one of the at least two separate belts have a different modulus of elasticity.

12. (Previously presented) The belt kit according to claim 9, wherein the plurality of projections of the first belt are different in height than the plurality of projections of the second belt.

13. (Previously presented) The belt kit according to claim 9, wherein the plurality of projections of the first belt have a different modulus of elasticity than the plurality of projections of the second belt.

14. (Withdrawn) An exercise system comprising:
at least two exercise mats, the at least two exercise mats each comprising a base having a plurality of projections extending upward from the base, and
wherein the at least two exercise mats are different from each other in at least one of a size of the plurality of projections and a surface treatment.

15. (Withdrawn) The exercise system according to claim 14, wherein at least two of the plurality of projections on one of the at least two exercise mats have different heights.

16. (Withdrawn) The exercise system according to claim 14, wherein at least two of the plurality of projections on one of the at least two exercise mats have a different modulus of elasticity.

17. (Withdrawn) The exercise system according to claim 14, wherein the plurality of projections of one of the at least two exercise mats are different in height than the plurality of projections of a second of the at least two exercise mats.

18. (Withdrawn) The exercise system according to claim 14, wherein the plurality of projections of one of the at least two exercise mats has a different modulus of elasticity than the plurality of projections of a second of the at least two exercise mats.

REMARKS

Claims 9-13 are pending and have been amended in the present application. Claims 1-8 and 14-18 have been restricted and withdrawn from consideration.

Claims 9, 10 and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,925,183 to Kim in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,066,000 to Dolan and U.S. Patent No. 6,210,349 to Naruse et al. Claims 11 and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kim in view of Dolan and Naruse et al., and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,029,962 to Shorten et al. Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections and requests reconsideration of the rejections in view of the following remarks.

Among the limitations of independent claim 9 which are neither disclosed nor suggested in the prior art of record is a belt kit for a treadmill comprising “at least two separate belts dimensioned for use on the treadmill,” “a first belt of the at least two separate belts having a first continuous, consistent surface,” “a second belt of the at least two separate belts having a second continuous, consistent surface,” wherein “the first belt and the second belt are dimensioned for direct foot contact,” and “the first belt is dimensioned to impart proprioceptive demands on the foot, ankle and lower leg different from those of the second belt.” The use of such separate belts that impart different proprioceptive demands on the foot, ankle and lower leg, is advantageous in aiding persons during physical therapy, for example.

Neither Kim, Dolan, Naruse et al. or Shorten et al., teach or suggest such a belt kit for a treadmill. Kim is directed to an indoor bicycle that simulates a road surface and requires the user to balance the bicycle during use. See Col. 1, lines 51-64. Although Kim discloses that the treadmill surface is provided with irregularities to simulate a road surface, there is no disclosure whatsoever in Kim of providing multiple belts with different surfaces.

In addition, there is simply no teaching or reasoning in Kim for modifying the device to provide a surface that contacts the foot directly, let alone at least two separate belts dimensioned to

impart different proprioceptive demands on the foot, ankle and lower leg, as required by independent claim 9.

Kim simply does not provide any reason why one would remove the bicycle and use the treadmill standing alone, let alone use such a treadmill for altering the proprioceptive demands on the foot, ankle and lower leg. The device of Kim is not designed for this purpose.

Dolan does not remedy any of the deficiencies of Kim. Dolan is directed to a portable multi-surface track. In the system of Dolan, a plurality of track sections, each with a different surface type, are assembled to form the multi-surface track. Once assembled, the patient is guided along the multi-surface track, from different surface to different surface, to practice their walking and balance skills. See Dolan at Col. 2, lines 40-45.

It is respectfully submitted that one of skill in the art would have no reason to combine the teachings of Kim and Dolan. As stated above, Kim is directed to an indoor bicycle that simulates a road surface and requires the user to balance the bicycle during use. One of skill in the art would have no reason to combine the multi-surface track of Dolan with the device of Kim because the device of Kim is not designed for direct foot contact.

However, assuming *arguendo* that there was a reason to combine the teachings of Kim and Dolan, one would not arrive at the present invention as defined in independent claim 9. At best, one would arrive at a treadmill for a bicycle that has a single belt with different consecutive surface types, and not at least two separate belts that are dimensioned for direct foot contact and impart different proprioceptive demands on the foot, ankle and lower leg.

Naruse et al. does not remedy any of the deficiencies of Kim and/or Dolan. Naruse et al. is directed to a foot massager with interchangeable pads. These interchangeable pads are not dimensioned to impart proprioceptive demands on the foot, ankle and lower leg, as required by independent claim 9. These interchangeable pads are simply designed to massage the soles of a person's feet. As such, one would have no reason to combine the teachings of Naruse et al. with those of Kim and/or Dolan.